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UNCLAS ANKARA 007308

SIPDIS

SENSITIVE

E.O. 12958: N/A

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SUBJECT: BOOSTING TURKISH ELECTRICITY EXPORTS TO IRAQ

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1. (SBU) In response to Secretary Powell's request that Turkey look for ways to assist Iraq's reconstruction, beginning last September, a Turkish company began exporting a small amount (50MW) of electricity to Iraq. The operator, Karadeniz Energy, has rehabilitated existing transmission lines at the Turkey/Iraq border and expects soon to increase the deliveries to 180 MW. According to Turkish officials, Turkey has considerable excess capacity and is very interested in boosting electricity sales to Iraq. However, further increases are not possible in the near term because there are not adequate transmission lines.

2. (SBU) Embassy has learned that AIG and the Washington Group are separately interested in projects to build and/or upgrade transmission lines and substations to Iraq. The Washington Group has consulted with Iraqi and Turkish officials and a group of Turkish power companies to build/upgrade transmission lines to export as much as 1,400 MW of additional power to Iraq.

3. (SBU) Embassy believes this idea is worth exploring. We recommend that appropriate Washington agencies invite the companies to brief on their plans and determine whether further discussion would be appropriate at the bilateral EPC in Washington, December 2-3, 2003.
EDELMAN